Wolf Supermoon

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Science & Technology*

Why in News?

The first supermoon of 2026, also known as the Wolf Moon supermoon, was visible in India on the evening of January 3, 2026, shortly after sunset.

- **Wolf Supermoon** – It is a nickname that ***combines two distinct ideas*** - a ***wolf moon & a supermoon***.

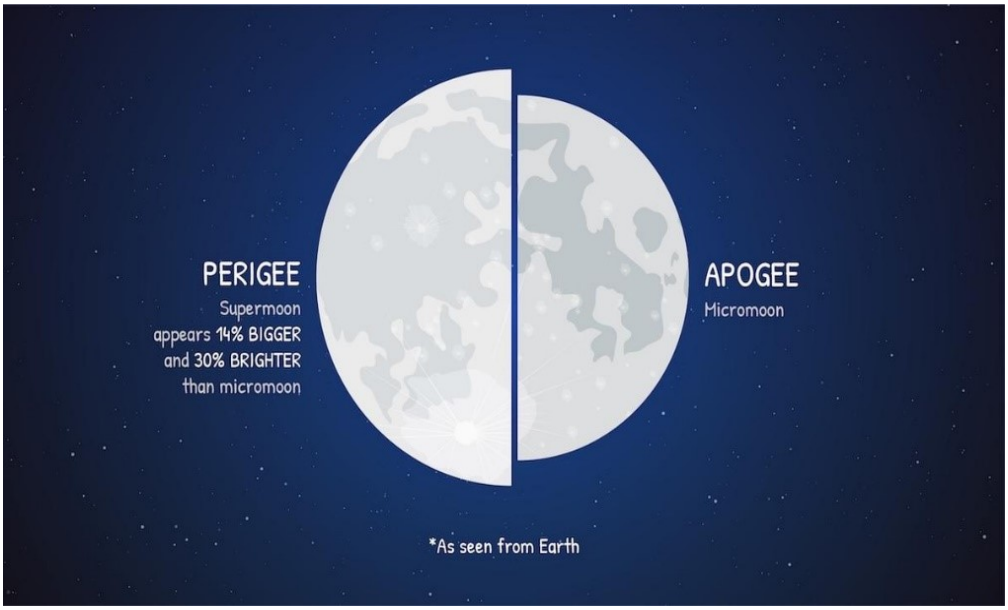
Wolf moon	Supermoon
• It is a traditional name for the ***first full moon that happens in January***. • **Folklore Origin** – Many full moons have seasonal names from calendars and folklore, which helped people track the time of the year before the advent of modern calendars. • These names helped people track seasons and agricultural cycles. • **Eg:** Hunter's Moon, Harvest Moon, Flower Moon. • **Cultural Significance** – The wolf moon is linked to wintertime stories of wolves howling more often during long, cold nights. • **Alternate Names –** Wolf Moon (Northern Hemisphere folklore), Moon after Yule (post-Christmas full moon).	• A "supermoon" occurs when a ***full Moon coincides with perigee,*** the Moon's closest point to Earth in its orbit. • This means that the Moon appears to be larger and brighter in the night sky. • We generally have ***three or four supermoons every year,*** so they are not rare, but it is unusual to have four in a row.

> *At the **perigee,** the Moon is about 220,000 miles away from Earth, compared to at its furthest point - or **apogee** - around 250,000 miles away.*

Appearance of Wolf Supermoon

- **Brightest & Largest –** At its closest, the Moon appeared 30% brighter and 14% larger than the most distant full moon of the year.
- The moon will not only appear larger and brighter, but as it rises near the horizon, it will glow with an ***orange-yellow hue***, positioned about 362,641 km away from Earth.

- **Moon illusion –** The moon will take on an orange-yellow hue and seem larger, a result of the 'moon illusion'—a visual effect that makes low-hanging moons ***appear oversized***.
- **Observation –** This supermoon can be viewed with the naked eye. However, to identify details on the moon, a telescope or binoculars can be used.



References

1. The Hindu | Wolf Moon
2. Hindustan Times | Wolf Moon

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering